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WGS 4309-001: Feminist Theories

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WGS 4309 Feminist Theories
Sect. 001, CRN 35723
TR 12:30-1:45 p.m. in CH 3691
Spring, 2020

“I came to theory desperate, wanting to comprehend—to grasp what was happening around and within me. . . . I saw in theory then a location for healing.” bell hooks, “Theory as Liberatory Practice” (1994)

Dr. Jeannie Ludlow

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e-mail: jludlow via D2L, please. **Please** use D2L to email me for course-related questions or concerns whenever possible. I receive hundreds of emails a week, and D2L helps me keep all your emails in one place, so I don’t miss them.

Office Hours: MW 1:30-2:45 pm; TR 9-10:30 am

Availability: If you would like to meet with me outside of these office hours, please do email for an appointment; I will do my best to accommodate your schedule. I check my email in the morning and in the afternoon on week days and almost never on weekends.

Description: This course examines feminist theory and its application to cultural and academic issues. It provides an interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of gender politics and gendered experiences. This section of WST 4309 will focus on gender, citizenship, and intersectional feminisms.

Course Format and Expectations: This is a seminar course, which by definition means that it is student-centered and student-driven. It is my educational philosophy that each of us is responsible for our own education; the role of the professor is to guide and facilitate the learning process, not to tell students what to think. Therefore, it is expected that students will come to class fully prepared to engage in discussions, activities, etc., that revolve around the assigned materials. This is a feminist course, which means that the course content and teaching are based in a particular political perspective. It is, however, never expected that students will unquestioningly agree with (or even completely understand) materials assigned for class. Critical thinking and articulation of disagreements and difficulties are encouraged.

Student Learning Objectives—at the end of WST 4309 you should be able to:

1. think critically about gender issues as they relate to a variety of academic disciplines;
 2. articulate how political, social, economic, and/or religious factors influence gender expectations;
 3. articulate values pertaining to gender differences across as well as within cultures;
 4. articulate the ways gender, race, and culture influence your own role as a responsible citizen of your community and of the global community;
 5. articulate an awareness of cultural contexts in which women have lived and worked;
 6. demonstrate an ability to speak knowledgeably about the relationship of women to several disciplines that comprise Women’s and Gender Studies;
- and
7. demonstrate an ability to write clearly about the historical development and/or contemporary applications of feminist theory.

Special circumstances: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact EIU’s Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible. If you require assistance with any other circumstance that arises, please do contact me as soon as you can, so we can work out a good plan of action together.

GRADES will be earned through the following graded components, which will be assigned whole letter grades:

- 20% Participation (includes attendance, weekly posting of discussion questions on WebCT, daily in-class writing, in-class and on-line activities and discussion, and successful completion of all reading and homework assignments)
- 10% Feminist theory t-shirt assignment
- 10% Theory presentation
- 10% WHAM response and reflection paper
- 20% Two take-home exams (10% each)
- 30% Reacting to the Past: Greenwich Village 1913 (includes game participation, two game-related writing assignments, readings, quizzes, homework, and a possible victory bonus)

IN ORDER TO PASS THIS COURSE, YOU MUST COMPLETE FOR GRADING
THE THEORY PRESENTATION, WHAM REPORT, BOTH EXAMS, AND THE GAME.

OUT OF CLASS ASSIGNMENT/MEETING: On Wednesday, March 4, at 6 pm in Doudna, we will attend the WHAM keynote speech by feminist historian Lynne Curry, Ph.D. This speech is an important part of your course materials, so it is very important that you plan ahead to be there. If you simply cannot attend for some reason, please speak with me as soon as possible; I will give you an appropriate alternative writing assignment, so you will not lose any credit.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Attendance is crucial to your grade. In-class graded activities will only be accepted for grading during the class session in which they are done (no make ups for in-class work; no exceptions). In addition, please keep in mind that you will be responsible for everything that is said, viewed, assigned, etc., during any class sessions that you miss. Information from lectures, discussions, and in-class activities will be covered on the exams. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate to find out what you missed and to make sure that you get copies of handouts, worksheets, etc., from me. If you are late to class, it is your job to check with me at the end of class to make sure you are marked “not absent.”

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: In this course, we will comply with EIU’s academic integrity policy (please see your catalog). I have absolutely no tolerance for plagiarism or cheating. Please note that “plagiarism or cheating” includes (but is not limited to) the following:

1. **quoting** from a source without correctly citing that source and/or without using quotation marks
2. **paraphrasing** from a source without correctly citing that source
3. turning in a paper with an **incorrect or incomplete works cited list**
4. **falsifying** data
5. turning in **someone else’s work** as your own—this includes (but is not limited to)
 - a. **copying** another’s work from a quiz or assignment
 - b. turning in work that **someone else wrote** for you
 - c. using on-line or hard copy **paper mills**
6. turning in **your own work that was written for another course**, without prior permission.

IMPORTANT: This is a senior-level course; you are expected to demonstrate senior-level facility with proper research, writing, and citation conventions. In your papers, do not cite/use Wikipedia, Yahoo Answers, Wiki Answers, Ask.com, or any other non-academic, non-reliable source. Be certain your paper uses a standard, accepted academic citation style (e.g., MLA, APA, Chicago Manual of Style, ASA, etc.) correctly and consistently. If you do not know how to use your citation style correctly, please get help. The best help is found in my office, on the Purdue OWL (online writing lab) website (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>), and in EIU’s Writing Center (<http://castle.eiu.edu/writing/>).

Violations of EIU’s academic integrity policy will result in an **automatic failing grade** in this course and notification of the Office of Student Accountability. For more information, see www.eiu.edu/~judicial.

LATE POLICY: Late work is strongly discouraged. However, late is better than not at all. Work will depreciate in value one letter grade for each school day it is late, beginning at 12:30 pm on the day it is due, unless otherwise noted. All work is due at the time noted in the schedule.

Materials needed:

PLEASE NOTE: You are required to do all assigned reading for this course. Two required texts for this course are available from Textbook Rental. Several required readings will also be available only via D2L. REQUIRED TEXTS from TRS

Mann, Susan Archer. *Doing Feminist Theory: From Modernity to Postmodernity*, Oxford UP, 2012.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres, eds. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, Indiana University Press, 1991.

Treacy, Mary Jane. *Greenwich Village, 1913: Suffrage, Labor, and the New Woman*, Norton, 2015.

If you need help with D2L, please let me know. If you cannot find something that is supposed to be there, please let me know that, too.

A great on-line dictionary site: www.onelook.com

ASSIGNMENTS AND PROTOCOL

PARTICIPATION

Participation consists of regular attendance and productive participation in class discussions and in-class activities. Please note that the **bolded** phrases are most important.

A = almost perfect attendance and almost never late; **active and substantive participation in class discussions, explicitly about the materials assigned for that day or unit**, involving obvious critical thought and making connections to other materials or examples; avoidance of “side” conversations in class; leadership role in group activities and discussion; professional interactions with others in class, even when disagreeing strongly, and in all communications with professor; inattention to cell phones and other electronic devices, except for class work

B = almost perfect attendance and almost never late; **consistent participation in class discussions and activities with some references to assigned materials**, even when confused or struggling with ideas; professional behavior in class (including not carrying on “side” conversations and not being rude) and in all communication with professor; inattention to cell phones and other electronic devices, except for class work

C = consistent attendance with full preparation of course materials but **little to no verbal participation in discussions** unless required; professional behavior in class and in all communications with professor; consistent “follower” role in group activities; OR consistent **enthusiastic participation in discussions and activities, with no explicit evidence of full preparation of course materials**; professional behavior in class and in all communications with professor; inattention to cell phones and other electronic devices, except for class work

D = frequent lateness or absence; unprofessional, rude, or inappropriate behavior in class or on the discussion board (including, but not limited to, doing homework for other classes, reading newspapers in class, occasionally attending to electronics, “side” conversations, etc.)

F = missing class; disruptive or hostile behavior in class or on the course discussion board; frequently attending to cell phones or other electronic devices during class.

E-mail guidelines: When you communicate with your instructors, whether by e-mail, by phone, or in person, you are engaging in a professional exchange. Please be sure to reflect this professionalism in your communication. Also, please note that I only check my e-mail two or three times each school day. Give me at least one full school day (24 hours, M – F) to answer any e-mail message—I typically

do not check my campus e-mail on weekends. (PLEASE NOTE: these are very good guidelines to follow for all your professors.)

Feminist theory t-shirt assignment: For every reading assignment, you will bring to class typed to turn in one “quotable quote” from that day’s readings (note: if we read two articles, you still only bring one quote). The idea is to choose something one might put on a t-shirt. Therefore, choose a quote that you find meaningful, inspiring, challenging, or representative of the kind of feminism that you would most like to promote. You also want to try to keep it short (there’s only so much room on a t-shirt, you know), so you may use ellipses one time per quote to cut out words. For example, the bell hooks quote at the top of this syllabus might be, on a t-shirt: “I came to theory desperate . . . to grasp what was happening around and within me.”

Theory Presentation: Each student in the class will present on and lead discussion about one of our course readings. I will, of course, help and support you with this. You will sign up for presentation dates on Tue., 1/21/20. When it is your turn to lead discussion, you will be expected to do a little bit of additional reading about the day’s topic. You will also be expected to share with the class one application/example that will enhance their knowledge of the day’s topic. I will model these expectations for you in class and will help the first person set up their presentation, so you will know how best to prepare for your presentation.

WHAM response and reflection paper, due 3/13/20 to D2L: 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage in the United States. This year, EIU’s Women’s History and Awareness Month (WHAM) theme is suffrage. To complete this assignment, you will attend the WHAM keynote address by Dr. Lynne Curry (3/4/20). Take good notes! After the address, you will write a short essay in which you reflect on and respond to what you learned from Dr. Curry’s address. Be sure, in your essay, to make connections to our class discussions and course materials.

Exams

Your midterm will be a take-home exam comprised of a few short answer questions (dealing with important terminology) and one essay question; you may be asked about any materials covered in class up to that point. It is due no later than midnight, Tue., 3/3/20.

Your final exam is comprehensive (covers the entire semester) and will be a combination exam: a take-home essay and an in-class short answer exam. You will turn in your take-home essay at the beginning of the in-class final exam session (8 a.m. on Wed., 5/6/20), after which you will receive the in-class final exam to complete.

Greenwich Village, 1913: Suffrage, Labor, and the New Woman Reacting to the Past role-playing activity

This is an educational role-playing activity that we will enact with members of Dr. Sace Elder’s section of WST 2309G Women, Men, and Culture. More information about this activity is forthcoming. Please do plan ahead: read pp. 1-99 in the game book (Treacy) before 3/23/20. When you are assigned your role, be sure to read your role sheet and faction information thoroughly. Your success in the game depends largely on your understanding of the reading assignments.

As part of the game play, you will complete two short writing assignments (one persuasive speech and one creative assignment) and several graded quizzes (completed on D2L before class that day). Players earn Personal Influence Points, in part, by being fully engaged in game play (costuming, making art, networking with other players to bring about change, etc.). The materials and events in Greenwich Village, 1913 will be covered on your final exam.

NOTE: there will be a separate D2L page for GV1913, which our class will share with Dr. Elder’s class.

WGS 4309 Feminist Theories
Tentative Schedule
Mann = *Doing Feminist Theory*
Mohanty = *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*
Treacy = *Greenwich Village 1913*

date	DUE	IN CLASS ACTIVITIES
T 1/14	IN CLASS: read Hay, "Who Counts as a Woman?" (D2L in folder called "Assignments")	discussion: what is feminism? who is it for? compare and contrast: Gray, "Marching Nowhere"
R 1/16	READ: entire syllabus, carefully READ: hooks, "Theory as Liberatory Practice" (D2L) DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	discussion: go over your questions about the syllabus, books; critical thinking and feminist criticism discussion: theory, practice, praxis
T 1/21	READ: protofeminist writings (D2L) NOTE: there are <u>a lot</u> of these writings; they are very short. As you read, you will find it helpful to keep a list of the authors, their time periods, nations, and the feminist themes they address. Otherwise, this assignment may get very confusing. DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	discussion: protofeminisms—themes, topics, approaches, contexts in class: sign up for presentation date
R 1/23	READ: Mann, intro and chp. 1 (to p. 30) DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	discussion: why do we study feminist theories?
T 1/28	READ: Mann, chp. 2 (pp. 31-77) DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	PRESENTER: Hannah Wilkes discussion: liberal feminisms
R 1/30	READ: Mann, chp. 3 (pp. 78-111) DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	PRESENTER: n/a discussion: radical feminisms
T 2/4	READ: Mann, chp. 4 DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	PRESENTER: n/a discussion: Marxist, socialist, anarchist feminisms
R 2/6	READ: Mann, chp. 5 DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	PRESENTER: Paige Olsby discussion: intersectional feminisms
T 2/11	READ: excerpts from <i>This Bridge Called my Back</i> (D2L); Combahee River Collective Statement (D2L) DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	PRESENTER: Hannah Gillaspie discussion: the roots of radical intersectionality
R 2/13	READ: Anzaldúa "En Rapport, In Opposition"; Lorde excerpts from <i>Sister Outsider</i> ; Hurtado, "Relating to Privilege" (all on D2L) DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	PRESENTER: Imani Ryan discussion: the limitations of "sisterhood"
T 2/18	READ: Mohanty, "Introduction: Cartographies of Struggle . . ." (Mohanty pp. 1-47) DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	PRESENTER: Sarah Allen discussion: transnational feminisms, defined
R 2/20	READ: Barroso and Bruschini, "Building Politics from Personal Lives" (Mohanty pp. 153-72) DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	PRESENTER: Tearny Sherwin discussion: transnational feminisms and sexuality
T 2/25	READ: Harrison, Faye V. "Women in Jamaica's Urban Informal Economy" (Mohanty pp. 173-96) DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	PRESENTER: Desmond Gardner discussion: transnational feminisms and economics DISTRIBUTED: Midterm exam
R 2/27	READ: no reading due	in class: midterm exam work session; bring to class the first draft of your midterm answers

T 3/3	READ: Mann, chp. 6, to p. 233; also Irigaray, "When Our Lips Speak Together" (D2L) DUE: Midterm exam, to D2L, before midnight	PRESENTER: Sadiya Collins discussion: postmodern/poststructuralist feminisms
W 3/4	6 pm WHAM Keynote address, Doudna Lecture hall attendance required	Dr. Lynne Curry
R 3/5	READ: no reading due	in class: TBA
T 3/10	READ: Mann, chp. 6, p. 233-end	PRESENTER: Blu Elliott discussion: queer theory/transfeminisms
R 3/12	READ: DUE: feminist theory t-shirt quote	discussion: queer theory/transfeminisms
F 3/13	DUE: WHAM response and reflection paper to D2L	

MARCH 15-21 is Spring Break—have a safe and happy break!

T 3/24	Reacting to the Past Game session 1 DUE before class: quiz #1 on D2L	See Treacy p. 85 for assignment;
W 3/25	4 pm WHAM EVENT	CIFFF film festival
R 3/26	Reacting to the Past Game session 2 DUE before class: quiz #2 on D2L	See Treacy p. 85-6 for assignment
T 3/31	individual and faction meetings with instructors DUE: read your entire role sheet	BRING TO YOUR MEETING: at least three <u>TYPED</u> questions/important points about your role; if you don't have this with you, your meeting will be rescheduled
W 4/1	5 pm WHAM EVENT	WST AWARDS CEREMONY

R 4/2	individual and faction meetings with instructors	BRING TO YOUR MEETING: at least three <u>TYPED</u> questions/important points about your role; if you don't have this with you, your meeting will be rescheduled
T 4/7	Reacting to the Past Game session 3 DUE before class: quiz #3 on D2L	See Treacy p. 86 for assignment
R 4/9	Reacting to the Past Game session 4	See Treacy p. 87 for assignment

T 4/14	Reacting to the Past Game session 5	See Treacy p. 88 for assignment
R 4/16	Reacting to the Past Game session 6	See Treacy p. 89-90 for assignment
T 4/21	Reacting to the Past Game session 7	See Treacy p. 90-91 for assignment
R 4/23	Reacting to the Past Game session 8	See Treacy p. 91-92 for assignment
T 4/28	Reacting to the Past Game session 9	See Treacy p. 92 for assignment
R 4/30	no reading due	Game postmortem Final Exam review session
W 5/6 8-10 am	Final Exam DUE: final exam essay before you receive your in-class exam	